



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO – Volcano

Fact Sheet #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2002

January 20, 2002

Numbers Affected

Total Affected: Estimates range from 300,000 to 500,000 (United States Government)
Deaths: 45 (U.N.)
Displaced People: Estimates range from 200,000 to 300,000 (U.S. Embassy in Rwanda) to 350,000 (local authorities)

Current Situation

- On January 20, local authorities in Goma reported that more than 150,000 people remained in Goma during the peak of the lava flow, more than 250,000 people sought refuge in Rwanda, and that more than 100,000 people fled towards Sake and other points west of Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The report also indicated that people were returning back to Goma.
- On January 18, U.S. Embassy officials, based in Kigali, Rwanda traveled to the affected area and reported at least 25 confirmed deaths. The report estimated that from 200,000 to 300,000 people have been displaced, including more than 15,000 along the road between Goma and Gisenyi. The report indicated that looting is relatively light, but is expected to increase as residents slowly return to Goma.
- Field reports from USAID/OFDA staff in Gisenyi, Rwanda indicate a fluid movement of displaced people. On the morning of January 20, more than 15,000 people per hour were returning to Goma from points east of the city, while only 3,000 people per hour were fleeing the city to locations west of the city.
- USAID/OFDA field staff report that Goma's four water stations remain intact, but that electricity is needed to operate the facilities. In addition, local authorities and NGOs are assessing the underground pipe network to determine the extent of damage. Twelve chlorination points have been established along Lake Kivu for treatment of water.
- According to a January 20 USAID field report, NGOs report that more than 50,000 internally displaced are in Sake and an additional 7,500 people in Mugunga. An NGO assessment of Sake is scheduled to take place on January 21.
- USAID/OFDA field staff report that the airstrip at Goma remains unusable.
- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported on January 20 that the lava flow had divided the town into three sectors, and that 30-40 percent of Goma town had been destroyed. Aftershocks, including a strong earthquake felt at early in the morning on January 20, indicate continued seismic activity in the area.
- On the morning of January 19, a five-member UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team arrived in Kigali, Rwanda. The team includes two volcanologists and a geochemist.
- The Government of Rwanda has opened two IDP camps approximately 25 kilometers from Gisenyi with a potential capacity for 85,000 people. The facilities already have some buildings and operable water systems. As of January 20, OCHA indicated that only 1,400 people have arrived at the Red Cross operated camp at Mudembe, while an additional 6,000 people are receiving basic assistance at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) operated camp at Nkamira.

U.S. Government Response

- On January 18, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Margaret K. McMillion and U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Aubrey Hooks declared disasters for the eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo near Goma in the DRC.
- USAID/OFDA has mobilized five staff members to the affected area to assess assistance needs and coordinate the relief response. USAID/OFDA mobilized both Emergency Disaster Response Coordinators (EDRCs) for the DRC, who are now operating out of Gisenyi, Rwanda. One EDRC was in Goma at the time of the eruption, the other was dispatched from Kinshasa. Two other USAID/OFDA staff members, including a Regional Advisor and a health expert, have been dispatched to Kigali, Rwanda from USAID/OFDA's regional office in Nairobi, Kenya. A third specialist in environmental health, water and sanitation management will arrive in Kigali, Rwanda on January 22.
- A USAID/OFDA humanitarian relief flight, carrying 20,000 blankets, 20,000 5-gallon water containers, and 20 10,000-liter water bladders from USAID's stockpile in Maryland will arrive in Kigali, Rwanda on January 20. The shipment will be consigned to the U.S. Embassy in Kigali for onward consignment to relief agencies operating in Goma and Gisenyi, Rwanda. Additional commodities will be made available as needs require.

- USAID/OFDA is providing \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa for relief assistance in the DRC.
- USAID/OFDA is providing \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda for relief assistance in Rwanda.
- USAID/OFDA has authorized Catholic Relief Services to reallocate non-food items stockpiled in the region for the rapid relief of populations affected by the volcano.
- USAID/OFDA will consider local purchase of relief materials and additional monetary support for relief activities in DRC and Rwanda as the situation evolves.

Relief Efforts

- In Gisenyi, a joint UNDAC and Government of Rwanda support unit has been established to provide daily updates on coordination of the humanitarian operations in Goma, DRC and Gisenyi, Rwanda. The joint support unit has defined leadership roles with WHO and MSF taking the lead in the health sector, UNICEF as the focal point for non-food items, WFP is in charge of emergency food commodities and logistics, OXFAM and IRC will coordinate the water/sanitation sector, and OCHA will provide risk assessment with UNDAC as well as overall information and coordination.
- There are several assessment teams in place or en route to Goma. These include a U.N. team from Kinshasa; a U.N. team from Geneva; a team from the DRC Ministry of Health; a team from NGOs that have relocated to Ruhengeri, Rwanda; and several teams from relief donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, personnel from the Mission de la Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) that relocated to Kigali, Rwanda, are conducting coordination and assessment.
- Relief coordination is taking place in Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, and Kigali, Rwanda.
- MONUC helicopters have been conducting aerial reconnaissance of the volcano.
- The World Food Program has begun shipping 9 metric tons (MT) of high-energy biscuits to Gisenyi, and is preparing to mobilize additional commodities in the region.
- A United Nations Development Program convoy containing various relief commodities, including 10,000 bottles of water, is en route to Gisenyi.
- MONUC announced plans to airlift 5,000 plastic sheets to Kigali immediately.

Donor Response

- The United Kingdom has indicated their pledge of more than \$2.87 million to the relief effort.
- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) allocated approximately \$60,000 (CHF 100,000) for unspecified relief assistance on January 17.
- Concern Worldwide allocated approximately \$90,000 (100,000 Euros) for unspecified relief assistance on January 18.
- The Government of Belgium has provided approximately \$1.8 million (2 million Euros) for assistance, and is arranging an airlift of relief commodities.
- The Government of Holland has made available \$40,000 for assistance efforts.
- The Government of Germany allocated approximately \$270,000 (300,000 Euros) for unspecified relief assistance on January 18.
- ECHO sent a four-person assessment team from regional offices, including a water/sanitation specialist, on January 18.

Background

- Mt. Nyiragongo erupted at approximately 9:30 AM local time (2:30 AM EST) on January 17. The volcano produced three paths of lava, one of which headed toward the city of Goma, 18 kilometers to the south. A fourth fissure opened at 4:00 PM on January 17. The area had been experiencing tremors intermittently since March 2001. The most recent eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo was in 1977, when the lava flow covered 20 square kilometers, killed 2,000 people, and destroyed 400 houses and a 10-kilometre section of road.

U.S. Government Assistance

- USAID/OFDA has provided \$50,000 for relief activities in response to the volcano eruption in DRC. The funds will be disbursed to implementing partners providing assistance to volcano-affected populations.
- USAID/OFDA is providing relief commodities valued at approximately \$494,000. The costs include the value of the commodities and the transportation.

USAID/OFDA \$544,000
Total USG Assistance \$544,000

USAID/OFDA fact sheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html